

Attorney Docket No. 81707.0173
Patent Application No. 10/083,635

REMARKS:

Claim 1 is cancelled without prejudice. Claim 13 is added. Claims 3-13 are pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Applicant believes the following amendments comply with requirements of form and thus may be admitted under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a). Alternatively, if these amendments are deemed to touch the merits, admission is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(b). In this connection, these amendments were not earlier presented because they are in response to the matters pointed out for the first time in the Final Office Action.

Lastly, admission is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a) as presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal.

This Amendment addresses the subject matter of Final Office Action mailed April 3, 2003 and the Advisory Action mailed August 4, 2003.

Claims 7-9 are allowed.

Claims 3-6 and 12 have been amended to depend from independent allowed claim 7. As such, claims 3-6 and 12 are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 7. Entry of the Amendments and allowance of claims 3-6 and 12 is respectfully requested.

New claim 13 is added. However, new claim 13 is identical to original claim 2 except that original claim 2 was dependent upon claim 1 while new claim 13 is dependent upon independent allowable claim 7. Applicant believes that new claim 13 does not require any further consideration or search by the Office because it was originally examined by the Office as original claim 2 and also, these limitations were examined in connection with amended claim 1. New claim 13 is dependent upon claim 7 and is allowable for at least the same reasons as allowed claim 7. Allowance of new claim 13 is respectfully requested.

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CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 1, 3, and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Someji et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,254,212). This rejection has been rendered moot because claim 1 is cancelled without prejudice, and claims 3 and 4 have been amended to depend from independent allowed claim 7. Claims 3 and 4 are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 7. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 3 and 4 is respectfully requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Someji et al. This rejection is rendered moot because claims 5 and 6 have been amended to depend from independent allowed claim 7. As such, claims 5 and 6 are patentable for at least the same reasons as allowed claim 7. Withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of claims 5 and 6 is thus respectfully requested.

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Someji et al. in view of O'Neill (U.S. Patent No. 4,011,474). This claim has been rendered moot because Claim 12 has been amended to depend from allowed independent claim 7. Claim 12 is thus allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 7. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 12 is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER:

The Office objected to claims 10 and 11 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but states that claims 10 and 11 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." In response, Applicant rewrote claim 10 in the manner

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suggested by the Office. Withdrawal of this objection and allowance of claim 10 is thus respectfully requested.

Claim 11 depends from claim 10 and is patentable for at least the same reasons as amended claim 10. Withdrawal of this objection and allowance of claim 11 is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6810 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

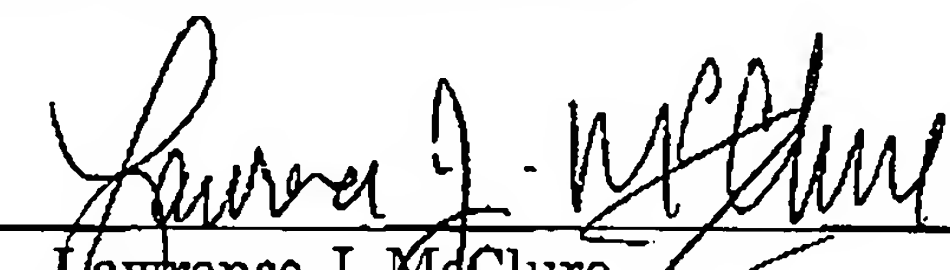
If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,

HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: August 12, 2003

By:


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